



CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG
MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

DATE: October 5, 2006

SUBJECT: Goals and Initiatives Online Forum Results and Submitted Comments

Attached are the compiled priority results and comments from the "Town Hall" Online Forum via the City's website as of September 29, 2006. Additional comments that have been submitted to the City by email have also been included. The results and comments are provided as information for discussion at Council's October Work Session.


Jodi M. Miller
Assistant City Manager

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Survey Results -- Overview

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Town Hall Online Forum

Respondents: 33 displayed, 33 total

Status: Open

Launched Date: 09/08/2006

Closed Date: N/A

Display: Display all pages and questions

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1. In order to help the Williamsburg City Council determine goal priorities for the City's 2007 and 2008 Goals and Initiatives, please select the goal(s) that you feel should be priority areas for the City. You may select as many goal(s) as you wish. You will be able to provide comments on the next page.

Character of the City- Protect and enhance Williamsburg's unique character- the historic area, college, entrance corridors, urban environment, and open space.

Economic Vitality- Increase employment opportunities, income, business success, and city revenues by supporting and promoting the city's tourism base and other development and redevelopment opportunities.

Neighborhoods and Housing- Protect and enhance the quality of the city's residential neighborhoods, and encourage the provision of affordable housing for city residents and workers.

Transportation- Provide an effective transportation system which is compatible with the future land use plan, serves pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, and promotes the expanded use of transit and

	Response Total	Response Percent
Character of the City- Protect and enhance Williamsburg's unique character- the historic area, college, entrance corridors, urban environment, and open space.	18	75%
Economic Vitality- Increase employment opportunities, income, business success, and city revenues by supporting and promoting the city's tourism base and other development and redevelopment opportunities.	9	38%
Neighborhoods and Housing- Protect and enhance the quality of the city's residential neighborhoods, and encourage the provision of affordable housing for city residents and workers.	10	42%
Transportation- Provide an effective transportation system which is compatible with the future land use plan, serves pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, and promotes the expanded use of transit and	14	58%

rail.

Public Safety- Ensure the city systems and facilities enable police, fire, emergency management, and judicial operations to protect and serve city residents, visitors, businesses, and historical assets.

8 33%

Education and Human Services- Seek opportunities and implement programs, where possible, that will address the educational, health, social, economic, and workforce training needs of city residents and workers.

4 17%

Recreation and Culture- Add to the quality and availability of recreational and cultural facilities, and enhance recreational and cultural programming to meet the needs of the city residents and visitors.

5 21%

Environmental Services- Ensure an adequate supply of clean, safe drinking water, protect environment through operation of effective stormwater, wastewater, and solid waste programs.

11 46%

Total Respondents 24

(skipped this question) 9

2. Please provide additional input and any comments below.

View responses to this question [view](#)

Total Respondents 12

(skipped this question) 21

3. Please provide your contact information in the box below:

View responses to this question [view](#)

Total Respondents 10

(skipped this question) 23

[SelectSurvey/AS?DisplayHeader=Yes&ItemID=106&ItemNu...](#)

Survey Results -- Details

[Results Overview](#)

Town Hall Online Forum

Respondents: 33**Status:** Open**Launched Date:** 09/08/2006**Closed Date:** N/A

2. Please provide additional input and any comments below.

**Full
Response**

INCLUSION

The city needs to do a better job engaging ALL its citizens and stakeholders in discussions, not just those who love to voice their opinions. One way toward achieving inclusion would be to schedule meetings at various times, so that everyone might have the opportunity to participate. Every other month, have an evening meeting.

DEVELOPMENT

If businesses and professionals are fleeing to "mixed use" developments, by turning these empty buildings into housing (or just the top or bottom floors), you'd be creating a new mixed use area. For instance, the professional drive (off John Tyler) businesses are moving to the newly opened retail centers. They are built to look like little houses. With a little creativity, we could keep these spaces filled and these communities vibrant. BY REINVENTING OURSELVES, WE CAN REMAIN VIBRANT AND REDUCE SPRAWL.

1. Please stop the sprawl...

And i must say, time shares? Really... Can we come up with something that serves the people who live here?

TRANSPORT

The increased service hours during the summer is confusing to me (BUT HELPFUL), since the fall is the time of year when Williamsburg is really hopping - students and tourists. It would also be great if our transport system could include some special event services. For instance, buses that run to the Ferguson Center for the Arts would be useful for tourists, students and others who use the system. The costs could be shared by Newport News (CNU?) and our Arts commission (state and local levels?) since it is a regional effort.

thanks for listening.

2. I would be more than happy to serve on any committees regarding housing and neighborhood preservation (I live on Matoaka Court and many of us are keenly interested), environmental issues and ways to encourage recycling amongst our students living off-campus and protecting green spaces and transportation issues, especially alternative forms of transportation such as biking. Tracy Shackelford

3. ,

Prioritizing the goals and initiatives is a challenge, but I tend to think in terms of what has the greatest impact on the public good. Certainly, transportation is key, and I am a strong advocate of an effective multi-modal system as I believe that a community in which residents can choose to walk, bike or drive is a benefit to every demographic group residing, or visiting, our city.

Our city is unique, and we need to preserve those qualities that make it unique. "Context sensitive design" is a concept which addresses not only transportation, but also community character, and even economic development. Obviously, we want a city that retains its character, but countered with that, we want a strong economic base. One of our strongest economic bases is our college students, and we are a college town. There have been some improvements of late, but we need to encourage businesses that serve students.

4. I'm a believer in providing for affordable housing. Communities need to be set up so that residents can live/work/go to school in one locale.

[view](#)

Finally, speaking of going to school, as a parent of a small child, I'm somewhat concerned that providing for primary/secondary education wasn't among the listed goals for the city, especially given the renegotiation of our current contract this year. I'm very concerned in providing the best educational opportunity for young residents.

As a new resident since July I am quite disturbed at the inability of the proper authorities to complete the work on Route 60/Richmond Road. I started to come here to look for a home in September of 2005 and this section was under construction. I do not know when the work started but as of this September it is still going on. Every time I drive by I remark to myself that no one is working. Reminds me of the 15 year disgrace in New York City with the East River Drive. Perhaps the City of Williamsburg is not responsible for these works on the Richmond Road but it is certainly responsible to put some fire inder thoses who are (presumably the State). The project should never have been allowed to start without a much shorter completion date. Recently the Public Works Dept repaved ou entire street (Woodmere Drive) in two days during the 102 degree heat. Shows what can be done. The Richmond Road business is a pothole to our Town.

5. Robert A Sewell

[view](#)

6. maP OF WILLIAMSBURG VA

[view](#)

7. All of these are worthy goals (though I think "Williamsburg's unique character" is a thing of the past). Surely the overall goal should be to keep the city alive as a diverse, healthy, interesting place to live and work--a real town for real people.

[view](#)

8. I am particularly interested in facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists so that possibly the use of cars could be decreased thus helping to decrease pollution.

[view](#)

9. If I had wanted to live in Newport News, I would have moved there 25 years ago. Instead, I chose to live here, in a small city with a unique character. I am disappointed in whatever "vision" has spawned the downing of 75 year old trees, in order to erect Walgreen's and the misery now lining Richmond Road. Every other municipality in Hampton Rhoads is trying to create what we already had-small town flair. bah humbug to Newtown-we had Old Town, and we are letting it slip into nothing...

[view](#)

10. Pursue development of neighborhood connector bike/walk trails.

[view](#)

11. Concerned with deteriorating properties in the middle to low income range (less than \$300K)and high level of non-owner occupied homes.

11. Traffic concerns in neighborhoods with cut through traffic and high volumes of traffic that require physical measures to be implemented

[view](#)

12. I am deeply concerned about the constant cutting down of trees and clearing of land for development in and around the city of Williamsburg. If this city isn't careful, it will become another Fairfax or Fredericksburg; i.e., one strip mall after another and an endless expanse of gas stations and convenience food stores. I hope there are people in the city government who feel as I do. I also thing there are tracts of land where trees should be planted (or replanted). I honestly believe there are people who have lived down here for a long time who do not appreciate the value of land left in its natural state, but instead see land only in its potential for development. Derek Mathis, 17 Priorslee Lane, Williamsburg.

[view](#)

[SelectSurveyAS?DisplayHeader=Yes&ItemID=107&ItemNu...](#)

Survey Results -- Details

[Results Overview](#)

Town Hall Online Forum

Respondents: 33**Status:** Open**Launched Date:** 09/08/2006**Closed Date:** N/A

3. Please provide your contact information in the box below:

**Full
Response**

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------|
| 1. | Tracy Shackelford
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M) 880-5726 | view |
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757-871-8639 | view |
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| 4. | Robert A Sewell
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From: JACKSON TUTTLE
To: Miller, Jodi
Date: 9/22/2006 10:58 am
Subject: Fwd: Saturday Workshop to develop 07-08 Goals and Initiatives

Pls add this to our comment received....

>>> "David E. Kranbuehl" <dekran@wm.edu> 9/21/2006 5:45 pm >>>
Dear Jeanne, Clyde and Jack,

I was very impressed by the carefully worded and thought out statement, which you delivered Jack to introduce the community forum on the 07-08 goals and initiatives. I am particularly excited and pleased to hear, now quite often the three words guiding our governance: Beautiful, Liveable, and Safe

I was also happy to hear that the 07-08 goals and initiatives statement represents effort and funding to achieve new objectives beyond the yearly efforts which you stated Jack will go on as expected. The meeting was well attended and a success as have the many similar citizen, governing board forums which have been the cornerstone of the creation of the Comprehensive Plan. These forums are fantastic, superb accomplishment and complement to citizens, our volunteer boards and elected officials and certainly to the city staff and you Jack.

What I want to see is this effort expanded and the well articulated desires of the citizens strongly stated in the 07-08 statement of Goals and Initiatives, and then followed by action and funding of the Goals and Needed Actions.

The first and most important Statements in the 07-08 Goals and Initiatives Statement should reflect the overwhelming emphasis on significant improvements in the concept of "Liveable" in the residential neighborhoods, particularly the older, focus designated neighborhoods.

For 3 years now we have been making as you long ago described it Jeanne, baby step, toward implementing a plan of action. As we discussed last month, the time is now to move to action. Here are 3 possible statements goals and initiatives reflecting the Thursday forum and citizen concerns from Richmond Road, to Jamestown Road to Skipwith,

I. Strengthen the aging residential neighborhoods to a quality comparable to (approaching) the most recently built neighborhoods, thereby encouraging homeowner improvements to the house and property. This includes:

1. Increasing the % of owner occupied homes to 80% in any block. Designation of any block with fewer than 2/3 owner occupied homes as an area at high risk.
2. Implementing a rapid response plan of action when the opportunity is there for inserting home-owner occupancy requirements in the deeds of houses as they come up for sale in areas at high risk and advance planning by working with owners where the need to increase home owner occupancy is great.
3. Full and vigorous enforcement of the three unrelated person law to discourage "cheaters" from turning residential neighborhood residential homes in to commercial money making ventures.
4. Aggressive funding to update the city owned streetscape to attractive-beautiful and liveable residential standards, including the sidewalks, the street lights and to conduct a survey of where above ground wiring fronts the street (Thereby allowing an informed discussion of costs, priorities and possible implementation)
5. Vigorous enforcement of existing residential parking

rules and Review of residential parking provisions to improve the ability of residents to park

II Strengthen the Economic Vitality of the City of Williamsburg

1. Strengthening the percent of home ownership and rejuvenating the neighborhoods through quality sidewalks, attractive residential streetlights and beginning a discussion on burying electrical wiring fronting the residential streets, has a direct consequence on the one increasing source of revenue over the past 10 to 15 years, property taxes and the major growing source of sales tax revenue and year round patronage of city businesses from hardware -clothing, to food and dining, as well as professional revenue from lawyers to accountants.

2. Re-examine how city resources are allocated to support tourism with a focus on placing greater emphasis on what improvements and actions will encourage return visitation, preferably annual visitation to the city of Williamsburg, a major theme of President Colin Campbell. In this regard how should "America's premier Colonial City" or a similar theme, promote annual return visitation to the city itself, all its stores, services and lodgings with certainly CW and W&M as a major component of what we promote along with the commercial and residential neighborhoods. We need to look more like Hilton Head and Carmel, where folks like me might go every year because we love the TOTAL residential, commercial, dining, art, B&B, pedestrian, bicycle plus the beauty on whatever street to are.

3 Develop plans to Beautify the city itself so that walking from the College and/or CW in to the city's residential, hotel-motel, bed and breakfast and commercial areas is as seamless and beautiful as is the transitions from residential- living areas, to working and shopping areas are within CW and the College.

III. Strengthen the City as a pedestrian and bicycle friendly city

1. Encourage walking in to the city center and out to the commercial areas by educating motorists of the law, you must stop for pedestrian on any and all crosswalks(Here we need to add "stop for pedestrians in cross walks" at most if not all crosswalks, especially for the residential elderly residents, and not just in student areas.

2. Conduct and implement planning to expand bicycle lanes on Richmond Road and Jamestown Road as well as throughout the city, interconnected with the College streets and CW streets.

IV Increase citizen and City Board Involvement in city Governance.

The turn out at all the Planning Commission

-Comprehensive Forums, The City Forum on last Thursday and the attendance at the Neighborhood Council monthly meetings, all indicate that city residents are very intelligent, have much to offer, have opinions that need to be heard. Their ideas need to be responded to. All processes are improved and errors avoided through increased consultation and more consultation creates the optimum opportunity for the best possible final decision to be made. Thus

1. More open citizen forums on the development of and later modifications to the annual budget and the Capital Improvement Priority list as well as increased communication at a detailed line by line review between the appropriate Planning Commission, the city council and city officials.

2. Increase citizen participation in council meetings by demonstrating that such comments are wanted, even needed, by responding to their suggestions and encouraging comments, even though they may sound critical and at times are strongly critical with respect to needed actions or changes by the city.

3. Set the time for all public council meetings as well as board meetings such that they occur at a time where the fast majority of interested citizens can come, can run for election or nomination without jeopardizing their job. Do not hold meetings in the middle of the morning or afternoon and thereby exclude citizens with less flexible work schedules. This strengthens the ability of people in professions where they are not self employed, nor a part of organizations that encourage employees to use their working time to attend public meetings and to serve on city council as well as all the other city boards where we need more potential volunteers.

I think this is the most outstanding group of 5 council members we have ever had, an extremely strong Planning Commission, superb city staff. Thus there certainly is the greatest potential to strongly turn this city back around from the negative slide in the 90's and early 2000 of a large portion of our neighborhood residential areas, to increase revenue through citizen and return visitor support and to make the city of Williamsburg itself, as well as CW and W&M indeed Americas truly premier liveable, beautiful, and safe colonial capitol city.

I look forward to hearing your discussions Saturday and hope this helps. The Gazette article is attached.

David

Carolyn Murphy jots down residents' ideas about improving city neighborhoods

Steve Vaughan

Neighborhoods top meeting agenda

Town Hall participants not worried about safety

By Steve Vaughan

WILLIAMSBURG — A short time into Thursday's Town Hall meeting, two things were very clear: city residents are passionate about their homes and their neighborhoods, and Williamsburg is a remarkably safe city.

City Council and staff were meeting with about 30 residents to get their input on the city's goals and initiatives for the next two years. Residents were asked to give their suggestions to city staff members manning stations devoted to eight subject areas. They were also asked to vote for which of the areas they felt the city should make a priority by posting red sticky dots at that station.

Those unable to attend the meeting at the Community Building can vote and offer suggestions on the city's website, www.ci.williamsburg.va.us, until Sept. 29.

Shortly after the voting began, assistant planning director Carolyn Murphy, stationed at the "Housing & Neighborhoods" table, was surrounded by about half the crowd and furiously writing suggestions. They included "promote owner-occupied housing" and "strictly enforce the three-unrelated persons rule" onto a chart behind her.

Within an hour, the Housing & Neighborhoods station had accumulated 37 priority dots (participants could vote for more than one area as a priori-

ty).

"I knew this would be a popular one," Murphy said.

Meanwhile, over at the Public Safety station, police Chief Mike Yost and fire Chief T.K. Weiler had accumulated only four dots. And the suggestions on their chart all had to do with adding crosswalks or slowing down traffic. That suggests that Williamsburg residents feel pretty safe.

"That's the way we like it," Yost said.

Aside from Murphy, the busiest city staffer was public works director Dan Clayton, manning the transportation station. He had 21 dots within the first hour and a number of suggestions, most dealing with the city supporting increased use of rail and making the city more bicycle friendly.

The loneliest city employee Thursday night was economic development manager Michelle DeWitt. She'd accumulated one dot and one suggestion.

Other subject areas, including Character of the City, Education and Human

Services, Recreation and Culture and Environmental Services, were rated about the same importance by citizens at the meeting.

All received some suggestions. Mayor Jeanne Zeidler and city manager Jack Tuttle introduced the program, saying it gave citizens the chance to impact the future direction of the city.

Hundreds own timesh the in-laws The units 1 ketable f Weekend ne

Officials : maximum of three days, out all our rooms by thr Some loc skip the traff May 11-13, are expected crowning ev 2007.

But bring sellers togeth market isn't seems.

Maryann I husband kno They've got Marriott Mar rent for the Anniversary they've been : to market it.

"We like 1 much that we Colony," she to rent out the to make some

They're as the timeshare, pool and golf think that's r

Binns
OF WILLIAMSBURG

Something bold.

Your Bonus: Free* with any Clinique

Bonus includes:

- Blushing Blush Powder Blush with Brush in 1
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Mon - Sat, 10-6 p.m.
Open Evenings by Appointment

From: GERRY WALTON
To: DAN CLAYTON; JACKSON TUTTLE; Jodi Miller
Date: 9/26/2006 12:42 pm
Subject: Fwd: City Goals

>>> Farrell Braun <siberianirislover@yahoo.com> 9/26/2006 11:20 am >>>

I think a major goal for Williamsburg is to preserve what we have. Last tropical storm eroded very badly the banks of the creeks that cross merimac Trail to the point that the side of the road is crumbling. If broken concrete is dumped along the edge this could help to preserve it. Construction is going on at a business on Second Street with much broken concrete that they appear to be getting rid of. This might be obtained at very low cost IF it is done now!

Farrell Braun
645-4178

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From: "Nimbus" <nimbus@widomaker.com>
To: <nimbus@widomaker.com>
Date: 9/29/2006 3:19 pm
Subject: City Goals

29 September 2006

Dear Mr. Tuttle:

Thank you for the opportunity to communicate my deep concerns for our City goals.

I think an overarching issue that impacts City Character-Neighborhoods-Recreation-Environmental Services together is the need for firm determination to preserve, protect and maintain the wooded areas that so define Williamsburg. Now it is possible to drive along tree-lined, even woods-lined roadways in and adjacent to the City--What an incredible treat this is! To be in a City and yet enjoy the tranquil beauty of our trees! Our TREES and WOODS literally frame our tiny City!

And, not only do the numbers of big and beautiful trees make a difference to our image, they are THE bastion of clean air and clean water! They give us shade from our intense summer sun, which can reduce the need for ever more air conditioning! TREES filter water runoff to keep our streams, rivers and bay cleaner, which in turn enables our fish and crustaceans to live, which keeps our fisheries alive! And which attract visitors to scenic and clean water sides -- all of which adds to our Economic Vitality as well! And blessing upon blessing, Williamsburg doesn't need a major tree planting operation--the trees are here. But, the City can and must look for a variety of ways to acquire easements, ownership, or require serious greenbelt set asides between neighborhoods, commercial areas and along Entrance Corridors. Wherever the trees are, let us consider how the City can guarantee the trees and woods will be protected. Actually and seriously protected. Because the City has so many areas that are NOT to be built on--slopes and environmentally protected lands near streams and creeks, it should be possible to create permanent zones for TREE preservation districts. These Districts go to fulfilling the requirements for cleaner air, as well.

And, Williamsburg will benefit by being a cleaner, healthy, beautiful place to live, work, play and visit--distinctive from other places.

A second issue involving many of the same goals is DENSITY. Quality of life! City Character! We still have it! But, increasing densities to beyond sensible levels overcrowds existing infrastructure and hurts the quality of life that is the essence of this City.

Williamsburg is a tiny City with most of the main streets in place, and widening infeasible in many areas. Most of the inner City is developed. While some older areas should be redone, there really is no room, no reason, no need to yet again bump up planned density as the current proposed Comprehensive Land Use Plan language wishes. Residents are not clamoring for more density, our schools aren't clamoring for more students, no one is clamoring for more traffic. Seemingly only developers who don't live in the City and thus are not impacted by great increases in density are clamoring for density. There is no net financial benefit to more density: Heaven knows everyone wants to believe more people means more revenue--curious how it just never seems to work out that way. I know you have read the proposed comp plan--22 units an acre?? is cited on many pages. Where? Why? For whom? At one Planning Commission work session, two members asked, "Why are we doing this? For whom are we doing this?" There was no reply. After a recent session, I was told that with the limited size of parcels available, it wouldn't / couldn't actually work out to this number. If so, why include it? Surely previous downtown zone / densities permitted thoughtful residential in and near City Center. If not, and people, like us, wanting to live downtown in an urban mode, can look to a reasonable increase, but 22 units to an acre is beyond reasonable for compact, low rise Williamsburg.

The previous Plan bumped up densities from the previous plan, and this one really bumps up the numbers. Why? The City will soon see major developments adding large numbers of dwelling units on the last big chunks of vacant land. Even the recently adopted plans for those parcels are at a higher density than the previous plan projections for those areas. There has to be a reasonable limit on the number of

units / people our infrastructure can accommodate well; it makes no sense to continue to squeeze in more and more people to a developed City.

A parallel concern is the constant rewriting of City codes. Residents and businesses need stability to invest in roots here. Who, watching the City adjust, modify, overturn, broaden, our land use codes can have any confidence in the stability provided by the City? It seems that anyone wanting a tweaked code is immediately on the front burner. City departments, residents and business owners aren't given enough time to really think through possible negative consequences of quick and frequent changes. Again, when people finally get tired of fighting to keep high quality surroundings they will stop being involved citizens. They may move away or if they stay, they won't be active boosters or volunteers any longer.

Again, thank you for including my concerns and hopes for protecting the Williamsburg we love.

Sincerely,

Nanci Bond
416 Suri Drive
Williamsburg 23185